

THE MONITOR.

VOL. II.

DECEMBER, 1824.

NO. 12.

(For the Monitor.)

HINTS TO YOUTH.

YOUTH, like every other period of life, has peculiar temptations and needs peculiar cautions. It is a season of inexperience, of high hopes, and pleasing anticipations—a season of restlessness and rash adventure. The passions are ardent; the imagination vivid, excursive, and untractable; the mind, often precipitate, and scarcely able to brook salutary restraint. With a full flow of animal spirits, the youth is ever liable to be hurried away, as by a tempest, into scenes of untried and unexpected difficulty; where he either sinks in despondence, relinquishing his schemes, rational as well as visionary; or rushes to strike at once the decisive blow, and is himself prostrated by its violence. His pride scorns submission; and what he has rashly undertaken, he haughtily urges on at any peril.—*This* youth should be cautioned to moderation. Soaring awhile on his waxen wings, and hovering in mid-heaven to the admiration of the vulgar, he must expect soon to sink down, covered with shame, the pity of the discerning, and the contempt of his former admirers. A warm temperament is one element of greatness. Zeal and enthusiasm are a pledge of success in a bold enterprise; but unless held in check by sound judgment, they become fanaticism and are the sure precursors of defeat.

Imagination presides in all his deliberations; painting often in unreal colours of hope or discouragement whatever he contemplates, investing with ideal beauty and charms what he wishes to regard as lovely; and clothing with additional deformity what he already detests. He examines nothing coolly, or justly. What-

ever meets his fancy at first glance, never displeases him; for he identifies it with his own notions of what it ought to be. His own mind furnishes every deficiency, and prunes off all that is redundant, till it becomes to him the very creature of loveliness which his imagination had before sketched in the lines and proportions and colouring of perfection. In this delightful illusion his heart revels, and by it is darkly bound. Reason has no power to release, and conscience none to undeceive; for reason, conscience, principle, and instinct are all enslaved to the same mimicry of the fancy. Accident may break the spell. Heavenly illumination may reveal the reality. But, while the sober realities of life are less amusing and less vivid than the brilliant and lovely creations of imagination, there is little hope that the ardent youth, who has thrown the reins upon the neck of passion will be rescued by any power of self-control. Wisely did the king of Israel, who had experienced somewhat of this imbecility, caution the young man: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

Other youth there are who think too meanly of themselves, and by suppressing what is impetuous in their temperament, become on the other hand spiritless and cold. They attempt nothing, and accomplish nothing; never lead, and follow only with faltering steps. They strike out no daring designs, and support the plans of others with a cowardly spirit. In the benevolent doings of the day they rejoice; but, born as they imagine to nothing higher than the exercise of the milder virtues, and marked out to little or no influence on the moral destinies of the world, they live and die, and are satisfied to live and die, within the little circle which their timidity had prescribed for them.—To the cultivation of the bolder graces we would urge this youth. No fatality makes us what we are.

Men at some time are masters of their fates;
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

These youth are in the extremes. The one is tame,

the other violent; the one inert, the other abounding in deeds of pith and moment. The former is faulty, as a cool calculator, who deliberates till the time for action is past; the other, as a wellmeant enthusiast who acts by the impulse of the moment, conceiving, executing—and defeating a project all in a breath. The one is trembling and fearful, as the hare of the mountain; the other is as the horse that hath thunder in his mane; “he mocketh at fear and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword.”

These two characters blended make the useful man. Either alone does nothing, or worse than nothing. The princely ship is indeed driven rapidly by fierce winds which mock the ruling power of her helm; but is constantly in danger of driving on rocks and dashing in fragments. Violent emotion must be held firmly by sound judgment; no tempest of passion should be allowed to agitate the mind above entire self-control. And, on the other hand, excessive caution should not forever exile emotion. Becalmed, the ship rocks heavily, but without progress.

Judgment and emotion combined make the man.

G.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, CONTINUED.

ON Wednesday after his ordination, accompanied by a friend, his wife, and sister, he set off for Cincinnati to administer the sacrament of the Lord's supper in the Second Presbyterian Church. In the evening, agreeably to appointment, preached in Franklin, 15 miles from Dayton. The next evening we reached Cincinnati. On Friday evening Mr. Wilbur preached a preparatory lecture, from Exodus xix. 10, 11. The next day he complained of a pain in his head and stiff neck; supposed he had taken cold the preceding evening. He studied very hard part of the day and late at night; as it was the first time of his administering the ordinance, he had a great deal of preparation to make. The next day he preached on the sufferings of Christ, and administered the sacrament; there were two tables

which made the service more laborious. He complained much in the afternoon, but was prevailed on to preach in the evening, for Mr. Wilson, and baptize his child. Monday afternoon attended the meeting of the Female Benevolent Society; spoke at some length, prayed, and sung. In the evening attended the Monthly Concert of prayer; spoke from these words, *Thy kingdom come*, and concluded with as fervent a prayer as ever I heard him make. On Thursday commenced his journey homeward, and arrived on Friday at Dayton. Mr. Wilbur was very ill; we sent immediately for a physician. From this time he never sat up except to have his bed made. He would not give up the idea of preaching till Saturday morning. On Friday he said I fear I shall be badly prepared for the Sabbath. I should be thinking on a message for my people. On Sabbath he requested to have writing materials brought him, sat up in bed, and wrote a short note to be read in church. He was quite exhausted with the exertion, and seemed overcome with the thought how soon his strength had failed. He mentioned what he had done the Sabbath before, and "there," said he, pointing to the note, "I have sent my dear people all the strength I have." He requested me to get the *Christian Observer*, that he might select a sermon. I read him several texts and the divisions, and he selected one to be read in church. He said he feared he had been too much taken up with the affairs of this world; had not devoted himself enough to his Master's work, and now the Lord, as a chastisement, took from him the privilege of bearing his message to the people; said he hoped he should improve by the providence, and be more engaged than ever he had been for the salvation of precious souls; he feared he had felt too indifferent while he declared the counsel of God, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear; that he had not wrestled hard enough with God for his blessing on the word spoken. He hoped his family would improve by the chastisement and be a family devoted to God; be less encumbered with the things of time, and think and speak more of the concerns of our

souls, be able to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, be examples to the flock over which he believed the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer, be more fervent in spirit serving the Lord. In this strain he frequently talked with me as I sat alone in the room with him. O had I thought how soon he was to be taken away, how much more anxious should I have felt to treasure up his words in my mind! Through the next week he was too ill to be able to converse much, being constantly under the operation of medicine. He several times remarked, "I never knew how poor a place a sick bed was to make preparation for eternity till now; thanks be to God who enabled me, before I was laid on a sick bed, to examine the foundation on which I was building for eternity." He frequently expressed his surprise that his thoughts were not placed more on God, said his mind wandered so he could hardly command it to offer a prayer of any length. He frequently repeated the two first verses of the 20th Hymn of the 2d book of Watts.

"Why is my heart so far from thee," &c.

About Thursday he began to be flighty,—frequently imagined that persons came to him to have their children baptized. This I suppose arose from the knowledge that a number of persons in the congregation were waiting till he should be ordained, to have their children baptized. One night in particular he appeared to address himself to some one, and said, "I am not able at present to baptize your children; are you acquainted with the nature of the ordinance?" He then paused as if for an answer; and then went on to explain the nature and design of baptism; the duties incumbent on those who presented their children for baptism; the privilege it was that children might thus in their infancy be admitted into the church. He quoted quite lengthy passages of Scripture in proof of what he advanced, and concluded with,—“Sir, I believe I have said all I am at this time able to say; when I am able, I will with pleasure comply with your request.” On Sabbath he dictated a note for me to write to the congregation, mentioning

that though God in his providence prevented the under shepherd from meeting with them, the great Shepherd of Israel would be in the midst of them; desired an interest in their prayers, and said he should meet them at a throne of grace; and selected a sermon to be read. He never seemed to entertain an idea but what he should recover; said he hoped he should not be impatient, but wait the Lord's time; spoke of the goodness of God in giving him such uninterrupted health in time past. The interest of the Second Church in Cincinnati seemed to lie with much weight on his mind. He often addressed an eminently pious woman of our acquaintance with such questions as these, supposing her present. "Does not the Lord Jesus appear very precious to you? Have you not found great support under affliction, from the promises contained in God's holy word?" And he would seem as well satisfied as if he received answers. On Friday, when I came up from breakfast he said, "Mary, there has been a man, an old man, here, who says he has been working for you, and you will not pay him. My dear, if he has been working for you, he should be paid, for the Scripture says, '*Thou shalt not sleep with the wages of an hireling,*' and we should be very circumspect that our good be not evil spoken of; indeed, he said things of you that I felt so vexed, I was going to strike him, but remembered a minister should be no striker." This was all the effect of his imagination, for no one had been in the room with him. Throughout the day he talked much of a delightful influence that filled the room, said it made him perfectly happy, and was surprised I did not feel the same effect from it. I asked him to describe the feeling, but he replied, that it was impossible, it was beyond description; if I could not feel it myself, he could give me no idea of it. This feeling he mentioned to the doctors and papa. In the evening, about seven, the doctors came in; I had been flattering myself all day that Mr. Wilbur was better, but I saw by their looks he was worse. I followed them down stairs and begged to know candidly what they thought of my dear companion, and received the overwhelming intelligence, that

there was little hope he could live till morning. To me it appeared a duty to inform Mr. Wilbur of his situation; it was a hard task, but I thought no one could do it in a way so little calculated to shock him as myself. I exerted myself, and I trust looked to the Lord for strength in this trying hour; and he whose promises are yea and amen, and who never disappoints those, who put their trust in him, was pleased, in the richness of his grace, to lay no more on me than he enabled me to bear. In as gentle a manner as I could, I gave him the information, which to me was so distressing. He asked, "Is this the opinion of the doctors?" When informed it was, he lifted his hands and eyes, and said with the greatest composure, "The will of the Lord be done; my views are not as clear as I could wish, but I have that hope which casteth out fear; I trust to me to die will be gain. The trial, my dear, of leaving you is one I never anticipated; I have thought my mountain stood strong; you must look to the Lord, he is able to support you; now is the time to claim his promises; he can be better to you than any earthly friend. I can resign you with confidence to his hands, who is faithful and true." Just then papa and his sister came into the room. "Well, Col. Beatty," he said, "Mary tells me the doctors think I shall take leave of you all and this world before the light of another morning, and my own feelings speak the same language. When I am gone, you will see these dear women safe back to our friends. I could wish to live to preach Christ to this dear people, to do something for the good of the church; but Zion will be true, the Lord is able to raise up instruments to do his work, or work without instruments." He then mentioned books which he wished given to his friends.

Several of the congregation, whom the news of his danger had brought to the house, came into the room; he spoke with much affection to them, charged them to try and keep up the Sabbath school; spoke of the importance of it to the church; commended his family to their kindness; and said many things which the agony of my mind prevented my retaining. About eleven he seemed to go into a stupor, and we thought took no no-

tice of any thing; but when at my request one of the elders prayed, when he concluded Mr. Wilbur added, *Amen*. On saturday morning he appeared very low, his senses wandering. About nine o'clock the room became crouded with his weeping people, when to the surprise of all present he said, "Let us address the Throne of Grace," and made a connected fervent prayer for the "lambs of the flock," as he frequently termed them. Notwithstanding his extreme weakness he prayed in so audible a voice as to be heard down stairs. In about fifteen minutes he said, "There is a duty in prayer;—there is an advantage in prayer;—there is a privilege in prayer;—there is a pleasure in prayer; let us pray." This prayer was for the church. Three times afterwards he prayed, and always prayed for preparation for death, and support and comfort in that trying hour. He took no notice of what was passing in the room, though it was crouded with those who came to take their last look at him while life remained. He was very flighty till midnight, and talked a great deal. At that time he fell asleep, and slept till two o'clock on Sabbath morning; he woke perfectly rational. He looked at me a moment and then said, "My dear, I am still with you; what time is it?" On being informed, he said, "This is the day the Lord arose; perhaps he means me this day to enter into rest; to meet with that great congregation which never breaks up. Mary, when I am gone, do not grieve for me as one without hope; it will perhaps be good for you to have borne the yoke in your youth. We hoped when this union was formed, it was not for time only, but eternity. Our separation, if we are but united to the Lord Jesus, as I hope we are, will be short; a few more days and this separation, now so painful to our natures to bear, will be ended, and we shall meet where parting is known no more. I can leave you with him who is the widow's God, the Father of the fatherless. In a few hours promises will be yours to claim which till now you had no right to. Let this providence wean you from the world; I fear you are too much attached to it; do not think I wish to wound your feelings by saying so; I only wish to warn;

this world is an unsatisfying portion; one hour's communion with God is worth all the pleasure the worldling can boast. I hope, my dear, you will feel submission to the will of the Lord, and the firm faith that infinite wisdom orders all things right. He is taking away your earthly prop, that you may lean more on him. Cast your cares on him, for he careth for his children." He then called for his sister, gave her his parting advice, sent messages to his father, my mother, and our brothers and sisters, and several of his friends. When I mentioned some of our friends that I hoped he would meet in heaven, he said, "Yes, and that Saviour, who, not having seen, I love." He then expressed a wish to see Capt S., one of the trustees of the church, who was called. He said, "I hoped to have preached the gospel to this people myself, but the great Head of the Church seems to order otherwise. I wish to give you some advice in regard to the church!" Capt. S. burst into tears, and said, "O! Mr. Wilbur, I hope you will be spared to us yet." He answered, "It has for many years been the desire of my heart to be instrumental in building the house of the Lord, but he knows what is best, and orders all things well. When I am gone, try to have my place supplied as soon as possible. I would advise you to get a young man from the Theological Seminary in Princeton; they have great advantages and are well instructed." He then asked me if I thought of any one in the Seminary, who would suit the Dayton congregation. I told him I did not feel competent to judge. He then requested I would get him the catalogue, and read to him who were there. He added, "How surprised they will be in the seminary, to hear I am in eternity!" To the pious who came in, he administered comfort, and told them he felt strong faith the Lord would not leave them long without a pastor. To one, who told him how much she looked to him for comfort and support, he answered, "You will now learn to lean on the Lord." He took the hand of one young man, and, with much affection, thanked him for his attention to him, then said, "I fear you are too much like the young man in the gospel that Jesus loved; he lack-

ed the one thing needful. Try to seek it." To another, "I think you have been for a long time seeking the Lord; how long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him." In this manner he continued to speak to every one that came into the room, till the doctors begged him to cease, as they had some faint hopes of his life, and thought he would exhaust himself. He said it was a duty to use every means to preserve life; that though he was perfectly willing to die, yet he rather wished to live that he might preach the Gospel. After lying still for some time, he groaned. I asked him if he felt any pain, "O no," he answered, "but the views I have of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is before me seem too much to bear in the body." Soon after, the Rev. Mr. G—— of Lebanon came. Mr. Wilbur seemed much rejoiced to see him, and said, "You will give my dear people a sermon. Mr. G—— went to prayer with him, but the doctor did not allow him to speak much, as he appeared exhausted with the exertion of the morning. On Monday he asked me what I thought of him; I told him I thought he was near entering on the rest that remained for the people of God. "This is a delightful thought," he answered, with a sweet smile; "but I cannot think so; are not God's people engaged in prayer for my life? and does not the Lord hear prayer?" I replied, "Undoubtedly, but does not always answer it in the way we expect." He said, "I know that." I said, "You wish to live, that you may do good to the church; perhaps the Lord may bless your death to your people, more than he would the labours of a long life." He answered, "The providence of God looks so mysterious, that I should be for ten years preparing to preach the Gospel, come all this distance from our friends, just be ordained, and yet never permitted to administer either of the ordinances to my own people. I feel a strong faith that this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God; and that I shall yet go up to the sanctuary, and preach the Gospel." I asked him if he felt willing to die, if it was the Lord's will. He answered, with emphasis, "Yes! this hour, if it is his will, I would go with joy." Through the

day he spoke several times of the faith he had, that he should recover; and said he thought, if the people were engaged in prayer for him, the Lord would spare his life. He was so extremely weak and low, that the doctor would not permit any to be in the room, except those who were necessary to attend on him. I sat by him alone for some time, and could speak but few words at a time. He seemed much affected with my affliction, exhorted me to lean on the Lord, and said he was praying for me. Through the night he was somewhat flighty, talked much of preaching, and asked with anxiety several times, "*Am I not a minister of the Gospel?*" and seemed pleased when assured that he was. There was no visible change in him through the night, and in the morning his friends began to entertain strong hopes of his recovery. While the family were at breakfast he seemed restless; wished me to raise him, and let him sit up; but on my telling him he was too weak, he said, "You know what is best, I will lie still if you request it." I walked across the room to get a drink for him; when I spoke to him he did not answer, and I saw a change in his countenance. I ran down stairs and called the family. I then put my arm under his neck, and taking hold of his hand, asked him if he knew me to press my hand; but all consciousness was gone, and in a few minutes he resigned his spirit into the hands of him who gave it, without a struggle, and entered into the joy of his Lord on the 29th day of September, 1818.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

(For the Monitor.)

EFFECTS OF LIGHT READING.

"And with empty pictures feeds his mind."

THE poet and novelist have of late taken the place of the philosopher and metaphysician. Instead of the rough and unpolished language of Locke or the obscure

yet expressive language of Butler, we now have the soul-ravishing poetry of Byron, the beautiful, tender, and melodious strains of Moore. Nothing will now meet the public taste unless it comes attended by the imposing harmony of flowing numbers. The zephyrs must now breathe the most exquisite perfumes, and the trees be dressed in eternal verdure. The charms of fancy and the attractions of novelty are the necessary attendants of every performance, whether grave or gay, whether delivered from the pulpit or the bar. Works of taste are now sought with avidity, and read with enthusiasm. The language of public opinion is, leave the cold retreat of sound philosophy, and range uncontrolled in the region of fancy. There you may find imagery and combine forms which have no existence except in your own imagination. There you may find gems to dazzle, and flowers to delight the eye, music to arouse, and melody to sooth the soul. It is true that the men of the present age choose rather to be dazzled by a meteor which fancy has kindled, than to be transported by the representations of solemn reality. While reading a sentimental tale or fictitious narrative, their very hearts seem to be on fire, they weep to extinguish the flame, and then, as if their sympathetic souls were satisfied, they rise to view with more than stoical indifference the same wretchedness in real life. The mind which is accustomed to factitious excitement, never arises to that degree of enjoyment, which is common to ordinary minds, unless it is first aroused, elated, dazzled. If a young man would now receive the public applause, he must be acquainted with the details of history, he must know at least the names of a score of modern novels. Even the sons of Levi must become students to the far-famed Waverley. They must have read Byron's last poem, or at least the last Canto of his Don Juan, though they have never heard of the labours of Edwards or Fuller. These worthies may be neglected, but it would be downright sacrilege never to have been rapt by the noble extravagance of Shakspeare's fancy. A poem or play is read for the harmony of its numbers, the beauty of its style, or the elegance of its expression; but it ex-

cites no kindred emotions in the soul, because the length and breadth of the author's meaning is not understood. The influence of such a course of reading, upon the mental powers, is not unlike that produced upon the body by luxury and intemperance. It creates a disrelish for all solid nutriment. The imagination becomes heated by an unnatural force. The mind is forcibly warped from the bias of nature ; the genius, instead of growing like a vigorous tree, extending its branches on every side and bearing delicious fruit, withers, because it has no depth of earth in which to extend its roots or fertility of soil from which to derive the necessary nourishment and support. It creates a slavish attachment to the particular form of an author's expression. It destroys all that independence of thought and originality of conception, which are so essential to an inventive genius. It paralyzes every noble effort of the mind. It will enervate those powers, the exercise of which is necessary to the production of any thing great in philosophy, poetry, or eloquence. The mind must act free, and uncontrolled. Close thought and a thorough investigation of its own powers alone will prepare the mind to disclose any thing worthy of praise or commendation. A man must be able to depend upon his own resources ; he must not fear to take the pickaxe and dig for the pure and unadulterated gold, though the labour may be severe, yet the exercise will give vigour to his mental powers. Though he may wave the pleasure which the careless perusal of the works of taste might afford men, yet in the end he will reap a harvest from the seed, which his own hand has planted.

ADONIRAM.

(For the Monitor.)

SELFISHNESS NOT THE SOURCE OF VIRTUOUS ACTIONS.

It has been said by an infidel philosopher, that self-love is the spring from which all our moral duties and

affections flow ; that a man's self is the centre of that system around which all his thoughts and actions revolve. He has, of course, denied the exercise of disinterested affection, and the existence of disinterested benevolence. In his system the pure benevolence of the gospel has no place. The love of a Paul must degenerate to the selfishness of a Hume, and the benevolence of a Howard to the narrow-mindedness of a Shylock. The moral character of these men must be the same, for they were actuated by the same motives, and governed by the same principles ; and it is the motive which stamps the character of the action. If it be true that every man is governed, in every action, by selfishness, there is no more praise due to the heavenly minded Martyn for his labours of love, than to the cruel Nero for his bloody persecution. If it be true that selfishness is the moving cause to every action, the glory of God never presented a single inducement to the Apostle Paul to preach and defend that religion, which was to the Jew a stumbling block, and to the erudite Greek, foolishness : that "charity which seeketh not her own," never led him to self-denial, never called forth a single sigh, nor a single exertion, for his kindred according to the flesh. Can it be that selfishness induced this devoted servant of God to endure perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils by the heathen, perils in the city and in the wilderness, perils by false brethren, weariness, hunger, cold, and nakedness ? Can it be that selfishness inspired the martyrs with courage to endure the scourge and the prison, to triumph amidst the light of the fagot, and smile at the point of the sword ? No, it cannot be. Nothing but an imperious sense of duty, united with a firm and unshaken belief, that the cause of God would be injured, and his glory tarnished, could have induced these men to suffer persecution and death, rather than waver from the faith and submit to the fooleries of heathen superstition. There are men whose lives are governed by better principles than those of selfishness. There are men with whom "to do the will of God is more than their necessary meat and drink." Such a man was Brainerd. Hunger nor thirst,

cold nor heat, could never deter him from the noble enterprise which he had undertaken for the conversion of the sons of the forest. Was it selfishness which induced this faithful missionary to exchange the happy retreats of civilized life, for the wretchedness and misery of the sons of the chase? No, he felt for their eternal interest, he hoped by his labours to raise one more aspiration of praise to his Father and his God. Nothing but a sense of duty could have made him a *voluntary* exile from his native land, and supported him amidst wretchedness and death. Nothing but an unwavering confidence in God, kept him from sinking under his labours; and nothing but the glory of God would have urged him forward to the discharge of duties, in the way of which so many difficulties were opposed. This is not a solitary instance. There are many others whose names are recorded, not in the chronicles of fame, but in the records of heaven. There are many others who are now enjoying, not the reward of their *selfishness*, but the happiness of those who have *glorified God*, by activity and devotedness to his service. Let not that man claim the name of Christian, who makes himself the centre of his own system, whose every thought and action is bounded by the narrow limits of his own private interest, whose heart has never expanded with the pure benevolence of the gospel, and been called to act by the glory of God, and the interests of his kingdom. If it be true, that selfishness is the moving cause to every action, why is the Christian urged to deny himself? why is it necessary that he should sacrifice personal ease to universal good? Is it expected that a Christian will act without a motive? It cannot be. But the very moment that he obeys these injunctions, he looks beyond himself, and consequently acts without a motive, if selfishness is the *only* spring from which moral affections and duties flow. Let us not, then, suppose that selfishness is the only spring to virtuous action, but let our thoughts and affections be placed upon God, for whose glory we are commanded to do and suffer all things.

ASHER.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON,

Delivered at Saugus, by Rev. Hervey Wilbur, the first Sabbath after his commencing his duties there as the Principal of a Classical Seminary for Young Ladies. The Text was selected from Prov. xix. 2. "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good." After expounding and illustrating this thought of the wise man, the preacher proceeded,

2. To point out some of the duties devolving on those who have influence over the education of others. In this commonwealth, there is a great responsibility resting on towns in their corporate capacity. They should make suitable provisions for good schools, well regulated, well instructed, and well supplied with elementary books. It is a gross mistake to calculate, How can some knowledge be given at the least possible expense? It should be the inquiry, How can the greatest sum of useful knowledge be given with the means in our power to use? Those who have the superintendence of schools should encourage great efforts to be made to excite a thirst for knowledge. Without such thirst in the scholars, little progress will be made in useful knowledge in school, and none is likely to be made out of it. By instructors of schools, great and unwearied pains should be taken to inform the understandings, invigorate the memories, and interest the feelings of their pupils. Without cultivating the memory, little knowledge can be long retained in the mind. Without cultivating the understanding, things committed to memory will be of little use. Without interesting the feelings of the young, time will not be employed to the best advantage, nor the value of useful knowledge seen.

The time of young children entrusted to the stewardship of school teachers, is a trust of great responsibility. If not rightly employed, through the ignorance or negligence of teachers, the mines of Peru cannot repurchase one day of it. If bad habits of study are formed, golden months of life may be expended to unlearn those habits, or they be found inveterate. These considerations should produce a trembling solicitude in the instructors of children and youth, to do all

that is practicable in expanding the capacities, and arousing the energies of their pupils' minds. And their efforts ought to be constantly seconded by parents and guardians, that children may see depicted in every countenance around them, an anxiety that their invaluable moments should not be misimproved.

The parent should never suffer a trivial expense in necessary elementary books, in his power to obtain, to obstruct the progress of his children in acquiring useful knowledge. Besides, the evils of ignorance, and the advantages of knowledge, should be frequently spread before the young, in the school and at home. But I may not enlarge on these particulars, for I must not fail to expand more fully the duty of communicating religious knowledge to the young. In this business, the parent is under the most sacred obligations to take the lead. As early as children can be made to know any thing of God, unwearied pains should be taken to convey to their minds a knowledge of their relations and obligations to him, with those religious truths the most important, the most easy to be understood, and those most useful for their years. The command of God to parents is imperative: "These words," (the truths and language of inspiration) "shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." The parent who looks on his children, and recollects that they have immortal souls within them, which are receiving moral influence from him daily; how can he do otherwise than feel anxious to do all in his power to communicate needful religious knowledge to them? How can he do otherwise than feel a trembling solicitude that his examples may not counteract his instructions? How can he refrain from pouring out his heart to God for wisdom and grace to enable him to train his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? If he feels as he ought on this subject, will he not be desirous of having his efforts for the religious improvement of his children seconded in all the places of instruction to which he sends them?

When he calls to mind that he must one day meet his children before the judgment seat of Christ, there to render an account of what he has done in person, and by others, for the religious improvement of their souls, where is the parent that dares to neglect the religious education of his children himself, or entrust them to the care of others whom he knows will neglect it? O that all parents had their eyes so fixed on the scenes of the great day, and on the commands of God, as never to neglect their children's souls.

But religious instruction does not exclusively belong to parents. Teachers of schools have more to do than merely communicate the first principles of science. A measure of parental duty devolves upon them, and an important part of that, is to communicate religious knowledge. I do not mean that a large proportion of the time in school should be devoted to religious instruction. No. A *few words* from the heart of the instructor, adapted to reach the hearts of the pupils, tenderly and judiciously introduced, might be of incalculable importance for promoting the religious welfare of the children. If these instructions were enforced by christian examples, and pious prayers, what instructor can tell but the felicity would be his, to have children, once entrusted to his care, come and lay their hands on his head, on the hills of salvation, saying, this is the blessing of those ready to perish? Besides, many present beneficial effects may be witnessed from such a course of conducting schools. What motive so likely to arouse children to improve their time, as to be frequently reminded that all their time is God's time, and he will call them to an account for the manner in which it has been spent? When this motive is seen to govern the teacher, it can scarcely fail to produce an effect in the scholar.

Ministers of the gospel are in duty bound to do much in person, and all in their power by influence, to promote useful and religious knowledge among the young. They ought habitually to feel and act under the influence of the aphorism in the text. Besides, what employment can be more congenial to the feeling of every

pious mind, than to be engaged, as opportunities present, in communicating religious knowledge to others—in leading the ignorant and wandering mind to God, and heaven, and happiness? If angels are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, none should consider it beneath them to minister to the edification and salvation of their fellow mortals. What if some soul should in the great day be found on the right hand of Christ, in consequence of special efforts in giving religious instruction to the young? Would not this amply repay a life of toil and unwearied activity? We have abundant reasons to rejoice in the new and vigorous efforts making for extensively diffusing the knowledge of eternal truth, and making the young, from infancy, intimately acquainted with the word of God.

[For the Monitor.]

BIBLE CLASS IN NORTH MIDDLEBOROUGH, MASS.

Soon after my settlement in the ministry in this place, in 1817, I appointed meetings to catechise the children. Within a few years after we established Sunday schools, which were well attended and evidently useful.

But it was not till last summer, 1823, that an attempt was made to organize a Bible class—an undertaking respecting which I had many doubts and fears about immediate success. As there were at that time but a small number of young people among us who were hopefully pious; and as far as could be discovered with regard to others the moral current was setting strongly another way, towards the vanities of youth and the amusements of the world, I had serious apprehensions of failing in the attempt in undertaking to embody them into a society for searching the Scriptures.

But, for the encouragement of others in like circumstances who may have similar fears, I can with gratitude inform them, that, though I knew it not, the Lord had prepared the way. No sooner was the proposition made, and the time of the meeting announced, than nearly seventy youth came forward and enrolled them-

selves as members of the class. I have since ascertained that for some time previously a number of these young people had been seriously affected, and had been constrained by their feelings to search the Scriptures; and that nothing could have been more appropriate, welcome, and useful to them than such an institution, to facilitate their inquiries. Nor did the regular period for the second meeting of the class arrive before the Lord was pleased to pour out of his spirit, and a revival of religion commenced. The revival, however, was general in the parish, though the members of the class shared largely in it—as of the number of between sixty and seventy, which we charitably hope were converted, nearly half were members of the class.

Our class meetings are once a fortnight, are generally well attended, and promise usefulness.

My manner of conducting them is as follows. Every meeting is opened and closed with prayer. Wilbur's Reference Testament is used as the text book. A lesson of a chapter or more given out at a previous meeting is recited and discussed by questions and answers, and concise passing remarks. Dissertations of the members are then read, followed by such questions as they are disposed to ask respecting any part of Scripture—more especially the part under consideration. I then give a concise, plain, practical exposition of the lesson—taking special care to illustrate the subject by comparison, when needful, so simple and easy of comprehension, that the least elevated capacity or youngest member can scarcely avoid understanding it. I then close by dwelling upon some prominent important truth, endeavouring most affectionately and solemnly to impress it upon the conscience and the heart.

This plain practical manner of inculcating religion among youth, and in public addresses to promiscuous assemblies it is believed has the most salutary and lasting effect.

The not unfrequent complaint that ministers “shoot over the heads” of their hearers, and that many children and young people attend public worship with very

little religious advantage, is not destitute of foundation, nor without occasion for regret.

The labours of many learned and good men are nearly or quite useless to a large proportion of their hearers, for the want of simplicity.

Well acquainted with science and theology, and familiar with technical phrases and distinctions, how many of the learned forget that the greatest part of their hearers have never been classically taught; and that never having had their minds logically disciplined, nor accustomed to abstruse speculation, they are not prepared to travel through a train of fine-spun metaphysics, or understand a learned, abstruse disquisition. And it is believed that simplicity of style is of peculiar importance in the instructions of Bible classes, Sabbath schools, and on all occasions where children and youth are addressed. Nor does it exclude attention to style, or taste; or any ornament whatever connected with learning or religion, that is worth possessing.

And when we consider that the rising generation is the hope of the church and of the state, and that whatever may be done by the means of education and of grace for the benefit of adults, whose habits are formed, and principles generally fixed; and who are often tenacious of opinion and jealous of innovation; it is among the young, whose minds are maturing and characters forming, that learning and piety must seize and secure their trophies—how can we estimate or form any adequate conception of the immense importance of the religious and literary privileges of the age, and especially of that system of benevolence, which carries the best of instruction to the inmates of almost every dwelling.

Ought not the christian, the patriot—in a word—every person, to be willing to engage in the good work of using such means as they possess to aid the literary and moral improvement of the rising generation? In proportion as knowledge, piety, and virtue increase in our country, liberty and happiness are secure; and just in proportion as they decrease our highest and best interests are endangered. Liberty lingers not long in a country where the population has become ignorant and

vicious; and where vice and ignorance reign is the very seat of human wretchedness. Let every one then be persuaded to "lay fast hold on knowledge;" and "in all his getting to get understanding." PHILIP COLBY.
North Middleborough, Oct. 1824.

BIBLE CLASSES IN SALEM.

To the Editor of the Monitor.

THE deep interest which you have taken in the religious instructions of youth, and particularly in the establishment of Bible classes, induces me to transmit to you the following account of the Bible classes which you were instrumental of forming in several of our congregations in Salem. It is now, as you remember, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ year since you visited us for this purpose, and had an opportunity of addressing several hundred youth on the floor of the Tabernacle church, and recommending to them the excellent plan of instruction which you had proposed in other places. The occasion was one which will long be remembered. It was the beginning of good things to many who were then present. Three Bible classes were formed in a short time in as many congregations, and the names of between six and seven hundred youth enrolled. Each class met once in two weeks—when three or four questions in the Biblical catechism were recited, and made the subject of remark by the Pastors. The meetings assumed the character more of familiar lectures than of a catechetical exercise. In my own class there were five divisions, two for males, and three for females. One question was given to each division, and was audibly answered by some member of it who felt confidence sufficient to do it. No one in particular was required to give the answer though all were requested to commit it to memory; but it rarely happened that any question was not answered by the division to whom it was given.

No meetings were better attended than those of the Bible Class. The subjects upon which remarks were expected, were so various, and often of such an inter-

esting nature, that there was a sort of protracted novelty given to the exercises. Attention became perhaps a more prominent feature in these meetings than in any other. But this was not all. Impressions were made which it is hoped will never be lost. A little more than a year after they were instituted, a revival of religion commenced in the town, which has extended chiefly among the young, and which continues unabated to the present time. More than half of the subjects of this work are the members of our Bible classes. And since the revival commenced no meetings have been more blessed than these. Many have here received their first deep impressions, and will have occasion to remember them with gratitude we hope forever. One young woman who had had but little religious instruction was so much interested the first evening she attended, that when she returned home she sat up most of the night reading the Scriptures quoted in the Biblical Catechism—till at length she came to one passage which went to her heart and produced convictions which she had never felt before, and which were followed by her hopeful conversion to Christ. Many other facts might be related of a similar kind. In the late examination of candidates for admission to the church it was peculiarly gratifying to hear one and another make frequent references to the impressions which they received at the Bible Class. Enough, however, has been related to show that among all the means which a faithful minister has of doing good to his flock, none are more important, or give greater promise of success than Bible classes for the young. I am persuaded that no such minister would be willing to be without an institution of this kind after it had once been established.

We have had but one thing to discourage us, and that is the small number of male youth who have been induced to give a constant attendance. Great pains have been taken to interest their feelings, and for a time, with considerable success, but for some reason they have become less attentive than the other sex. The fact, it is believed, is a very common one; male youth are brought together with much more difficulty for re-

ligious instruction than females. Whoever reflects for a moment on the influence which the former are destined in a little while to exert, cannot but regret this circumstance. May not some plan be devised to remedy this evil? And will not he who shall suggest such a plan do as great service to the church, and the world as has been rendered by the founder of Sabbath Schools, and those numerous other institutions which are the ornament of the present age?

I am, with sentiments of high respect,

Yours,

E. CORNELIUS.

Salem, Nov. 1824.

EARTHQUAKE IN SICILY, IN MARCH, 1823.

An Extract.

ON Wednesday, the 5th of March, 1823, at 26' after 5 P. M., Sicily suffered a violent shock of an earthquake. I was standing in the large plain before the palace, in a situation where I was enabled to preserve that tranquillity of mind necessary for observation. The first shock was indistinct, but tending from below upwards; the second was undulatory, but more vigorous, as though a new impulse had been added to the first, doubling its force; the third was less strong, but of the same nature; a new exertion of the force rendered the fourth equal on the whole to the second; the fifth, like the first, had an evident tendency upwards. Their duration was between sixteen and seventeen seconds; the time was precisely marked by the second hands of a watch which I had with me. The direction was from northeast to southwest. Many persons who ran towards me from the southwest at the time of this terrible phenomenon, were opposed by the resistance of the earth. The spear of the vane on the top of the new gate connected with the palace, and upon which I fixed my eyes, bowed in that direction, and remained so until the sabbath, when it fell; it was inclined to the southwest in an angle of 20°. The waters in the great basin of the Botanical Garden, as

was told me by an eye witness, were urged up in the same direction by the second shock ; and a palm tree, thirty feet high, in the same garden, was seen to bow its long leafless branches alternately to the northeast and southwest, almost to the ground. The clocks in the observatory, which vibrated from north to south, and from east to west, were stopt, because the direction of the shock cut obliquely the plane of their respective vibrations ; and the weight of one of them broke its crystal. But two small clocks in my chamber kept their motion, as their vibrations were in the direction of the shock. The mercury in the sismometer preserved in the observatory, was put into violent motion, and at the fifth shock, it seemed as much agitated as if it were boiling.

To the west of Palermo, within the mountains, the earthquake retained little of its power ; since at Morreale, four miles distant, trifling injury only was sustained by the (benedictine) Monastery of S. Castrense, the house of the P. P. Conviventi and the Seminary dei Cherici. At Parco, six miles distant, Mary's College, the Monastery, the parish Church, and a few peasants' cottages, were all that suffered. At Piana, the battlements of the tower were thrown down. But more of its power was felt in places on the sea-coast as appears from its effects at Capaci, four miles distant, where the Cathedral and several houses were ruined, and at Torretta, fourteen miles, where the Cathedral, two storehouses and some dwelling houses were destroyed. Beyond, its power continued to diminish ; and at Castellamare, twenty-four miles, the State-house alone had the cleft, which was made in 1819, enlarged.

In Maritime places east of Palermo, the shock was immense. At Altavilla, fourteen miles from Palermo, the bridge was shaken. At Trabia, twenty-one miles, the castle, and at Godiano, the Cathedral and some houses were destroyed,—enormous masses from Bisambra, a neighbouring mount, were loosened, and fell. At Termini, twenty four miles, the shocks were very violent, exceeding all that had happened within the memory of its inhabitants. Those of 1818-19 were

very strong, but the city received at those times no injury; now, the convent of St. Antonio, Mary's College, and various private houses felt its effects.

The warm waters, as well those of the baths as those from the neighbouring wells, which proceed from the same subterranean source in the mountains along the coast of Termini, increased in quantity and warmth, and became turbid; consequences that always succeed convulsions of the earth, by which their internal streams are disordered. The clay tinged the fluid with its own colour, and equal volumes of the water yielded a greater quantity of the clay than before, when the colour was deeper. Most of the houses in the little new town of Sarcari, two miles from the shore, and consisting of less than a hundred houses, were rendered uninhabitable; the walls were thrown down, and the more lofty buildings were all damaged. The effects of the earthquake are found to be greater in proportion to its advance eastward.

Forty-eight miles from Palermo, at Cefalu, a large city on the shore of a promontory, the effects were various and injurious. Without the walls, two convents, a storehouse, and some country houses, were injured, but no lives were lost. The sea made a violent and sudden rush to the shore, carrying with it a large ship laden with oil; and when the wave retired, she was left quite dry; but a second wave returned with such immense force, that the ship was dashed in pieces, and the oil lost. Boats, which were approaching the shore, were borne rapidly forward to the land, but at the return of the water, they were carried as rapidly back, far beyond their first situation. The same motion of the sea, but less violent, was observed all along the shore, as far even as Palermo. Pollina, a town with nine hundred inhabitants, occupying an elevated position at a little distance from the sea, was injured in almost every building; particularly in the church of St. Peter and Nunciata, in the castle, the tower, and in other places. Nor did Finale, a little nearer the shore, suffer less; five of its houses fell in consequence, on the eleventh of March.

Beyond the towns which have been mentioned, towards the interior of the island, the shock was vigorous to a certain extent; but kept decreasing as it proceeded, throughout the whole surface. At Ciminna, south of Termini, a statue was shaken from its place on the top of a belfrey in front of the great church, and a part of the clock tower, falling, killed one person and badly wounded another. In Cerda, the shock affected the great church, some houses, and half of one of the three forts, placed near the city to support the earth on the side of a great declivity.

Succeeding Shocks.

After the shock of the 5th, the black clouds which covered the heavens on the north and west formed a dark band, measuring from the zenith towards the horizon 60° and extending from north to south. It was terminated at base by a circular line, passing from north to south, through the west, and elevated at the southern part about 30° above the horizon. The sky itself was very clear, and its extreme brightness was increased by the contrast with the dark bank above, and by the sun just on the point of setting. A little below the band were two other lines parallel and perfectly regular. This mysterious appearance inspired with fear the minds of the people, who are always seeking in the heavens for signs of future events. But it prepared a tempestuous night which followed, with torrents of rain, with thunder, snow, hail, and wind.

On the night of the 6th, at forty five minutes past one, in St. Lucia de Millazzo, six miles from the shore which looks towards Volcano and Stromboli, a severe shock was felt, and afterwards, at various intervals, horrible noises were heard, four distinct times, rumbling fearfully beneath them; and finally, at half past three o'clock, the shock was repeated. Both were felt at Messina, but without any subterranean noises. Nothing of it was felt at Palermo, or in any places in the west. At fifty-six minutes past ten, in the night of the 7th, another shock was felt at Palermo, sufficiently strong to put in motion the pen-

dulum of a small clock, which I had stopped that I might regulate it in the Morning. Its vibration from N. E. to S. W. showed me with certainty the direction of the shock. Light ones were felt on the 26th. On the 31st, at two and fifty-two minutes, P. M. one was felt at Messina, moderately severe, of five or six seconds duration, and undulating. Two others on the first of April, and one at Costelbuono on the 28th. I should add that they mention a slight one there on the 16th of February, but they are more certain of those of the 5th of March, one at 1 P. M. the other at three. These were they, which induced the inhabitants of Naso to leave their habitations and flee into the country, where they were when their city was laid waste. Here the professor mentions many other places, in which small shocks were felt, in July and August ; but upon which no important remarks are made.

SELECT SENTENCES OF COMPOSITION BY A PUPIL IN THE SAUGUS
CLASSICAL SEMINARY.

THE importance of improving our time is a subject which ought to concern every reflecting mind.

Youth is the most important season for cultivating the mind, expanding the intellectual powers, and gaining useful information.

If the days of our youth are misimproved and trifled away we shall have no mental treasure in store to furnish sources of reflection.

Every misimproved moment will add another to that catalogue of pangs which conscience must one day feel.

(For the Monitor.)

CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

The harvest is passed ; and the summer is ended :
No longer the fields are mantled in green,
The birds on the branches their songs have suspended ;
No birds skilled in music, are now to be seen.
Soon the snow will come down, earth's bosom to cover ;

And snow-drifts, like mountains, the traveller impede.
The poor widow, around her fire of brands, hover ;
With children half naked, and half starved, indeed.
To us, God all gracious, has abundantly granted,
For every season, what is needful, and choice :
From earliest infancy, what have we wanted ?
A heart in the goodness of God to rejoice.
The ass knows the crib, where his master has fed him ;
The ox knows his owner, who yokes him and drives ;
More insensible man, knows not who has led him ;
Nor on whose bounty he constantly lives.
The Saviour of sinners, is the Son of the Highest,
His gospel we have, in a language we know ;
But faith is the vision, which apprehends Christ,
Who guides us to heaven, and saves us from wo.
The year will soon close, and it closes forever :
Alarming the voice. This year thou shalt die !
The last enemy, Death, the ungodly will sever
From good, and the hope of good : Lord what am I ?
P——y.

INDUSTRY.

So much that is wonderful has been recorded of the beaver, that several intelligent writers have not scrupled to express a belief, that it possesses but little of that surprising sagacity and skill ascribed to it. One of the latest writers on the subject, however, Mr. Joseph Sansum, of New York, gives an account of the Canadian beaver, which confirms the general character given of their habits and physical economy. He tells us, that in the deep recesses of Canadian forests, where the beaver is undisturbed by man, he is a practical example of almost every virtue. The Indians were in the habit of prognosticating the mildness or severity of the ensuing winter, from the quantity of provisions laid in by the beavers for their winter's stock. The beaver is a pattern of conjugal fidelity and paternal care ; laborious, thrifty, frugal, honest, watchful, and ingenious. He submits to government in the republican form, for the

benefits of association ; but is never known, in the most powerful communities, to make depredations upon his weaker neighbours. Wherever a number of these animals come together, they immediately combine in society, to perform the common business of constructing their habitations, apparently acting under the most intelligent design. Though there is no appearance indicating the authority of a chief or leader, yet no contention or disagreement is ever observed among them. When a sufficient number of them are collected to form a town, the public business is first attended to ; and as they are amphibious animals, provision is to be made for spending their time, occasionally both in and out of water. In conformity to this law of their nature, they seek a situation which is adapted to both these purposes.

With this view a lake or pond, sometimes a running stream is pitched upon. If it be a lake or pond, the water in it is always deep enough to admit of their swimming under the ice. If it be a stream, it is always such a stream as will form a pond that shall be every way convenient for their purpose ; and such is their forecast, that they never fix upon a situation that will not eventually answer their views. Their next business is to construct a dam. This is always placed in the most convenient part of the stream ; the form of it is either strait, rounding, or angular, as the peculiarities of the situation require ; and no human ingenuity could improve their labours in these respects. The materials they use are wood and earth. They choose a tree on the river side, which will readily fall across the stream ; and some of them apply themselves with diligence to cut it through with their teeth. Others cut down smaller trees, which they divide into equal and convenient lengths. Some drag these pieces to the brink of the river, and others swim with them to the spot where the dam is forming.

As many as can find room, are engaged in sinking one end of these stakes ; and as many more in raising, fixing and securing the other ends of them. Others are employed, at the same time, in carrying on the plastering

part of the work. The earth is brought in their mouths, formed into a kind of mortar with their feet and tails, and this is spread over the intervals between the stakes, saplings and twigs, being occasionally interwoven with the mud and slime.

Where two or three hundred beavers are united, these dams are from six to twelve feet thick at the bottom; at the top, not more than two or three. In that part of the dam which is opposed to the current, the stakes are placed obliquely; but on that side where the water is to fall over, they are placed in a perpendicular direction. These dams are sometimes a hundred feet in length, and always of the exact height which will answer their purposes. The ponds thus formed, sometimes cover five or six hundred acres. They generally spread over grounds abounding with trees and bushes of the softest wood,—maple, birch, poplar, willow, &c. and, to preserve the dams against inundation, the beaver always leaves sluices near the middle, for the redundant water to pass off.

When the public works are completed, the beavers separate into small companies, to build cabins or houses for themselves. These are built upon piles, along the borders of the pond. They are of an oval construction, resembling a beehive; and they vary from four to ten feet in diameter, according to the number of families they are to accommodate. These dwellings are never less than two stories high, generally three; and sometimes they contain four apartments. The walls of these are from two to three feet thick, formed of the same materials with the dams. On the inside, they are made smooth, but left rough without, being rendered impenetrable to rain. The lower story is about two feet high, the second is formed by a floor of sticks covered with mud, and the upper apartment terminates with an arched roof. Through each floor there is a passage, and the uppermost floor is always above the level of the water. Each of these huts has two doors, one on the land side, to admit of their going out and seeking provisions that way; another under the water, and below where it freezes, to preserve their communication with the pond.

(For the Monitor.)

CELESTIAL FIRMAMENT.

There is a SUN of keener ray
 Than gilds the silver clouds of day,
 When, in their fleecy grandeur, they
 Rest on the sky,
 And charm, though transient be their stay,
 The gazer's eye.

And there are *stars* of purer light
 Than mark the solitude of night,—
 Which, bursting on the wanderer's sight
 With glorious sheen,
 Urge him to view with new delight
 The gilded scene.

And they shall circle round the SUN,
 In their untiring course begun,
 When nature and her works are gone
 To swift decay,
 And, while eternal ages run,
 Ne'er fade away.

And 'tis a land of perfect bliss—
 The residence of righteousness—
 In which they sparkle numberless
 And fairer shine,
 As in their circlings they increase
 And seem divine.

O! I would be a *star* like them,
 In those far distant realms of fame,
 And glitter in the Diadem
 Of Him I love,
 Who lives—of everlasting name
 In courts above.

G. M. BARD.

N. B. Patrons are referred to the preface for our future arrangement.

